

Jim Doyle  
Governor



201 East Washington Avenue, Room G200  
P.O. Box 8916  
Madison, WI 53708-8916

Reggie Bicha  
Secretary

**State of Wisconsin**  
Department of Children and Families

Telephone: 608-267-3905  
Fax: 608-266-6836  
dcf.wisconsin.gov

Monday, March 30, 2009

Contact: Erika Monroe-Kane, Department of Children and Families, 608-266-9000

## **Department of Children and Families Names New Agency in BMCW Region 3**

Department of Children and Families Secretary Reggie Bicha announced today that St. Aemilian-Lakeside, Inc. has been selected to provide ongoing case management and safety services for the children and families of Milwaukee County. The Department has implemented a number of changes at the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, and the selection of St. Aemilian-Lakeside will help DCF continue to enhance performance and increase accountability in Milwaukee.

"St. Aemilian-Lakeside has the capacity and the commitment to meet the high standards we hold for protecting children and families," Secretary Bicha said. "They are a first-class children's services agency that has served the Milwaukee community for over 150 years, and we are very excited to move forward with them as we pursue our goals for BMCW."

St. Aemilian-Lakeside's service to Milwaukee began when they opened an orphanage in 1850. Today they are a multi-service provider offering support through treatment foster care, residential care, education and mental health services.

In the upcoming weeks, they will assume the responsibility for service provision in Region 3 of BMCW. The staff of St. Aemilian-Lakeside will work in coordination with DCF and its current provider, La Causa, to maintain the quality and continuity of care provided to kids and families.

"Ensuring the safety of children has always been our top priority, and it will continue to be our main focus as we begin working with a new agency," Secretary Bicha said. "St. Aemilian-Lakeside has a complete understanding of the commitment needed to provide responsive, quality services in Region 3. I am confident they will do an outstanding job."

DCF will review the new contract annually, with renewal based on meeting specific performance measures. St. Aemilian-Lakeside is scheduled to begin operations in Region 3 on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

In October, St. Aemilian-Lakeside was named the 2008 Agency of the Year by the Alliance for Children and Families. The award highlighted their organizational excellence, community and board engagement and significant commitment to youth who are aging out of foster care.

"At St. Aemilian-Lakeside we have always been dedicated to offering family-focused services," stated Terri Zywicki, CEO of St. Aemilian-Lakeside. "We look forward to partnering with the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare as we continue to empower children, families and adults to improve the quality of their lives."

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